

# PLAN AHEAD

There are many things you need to think about before you get pregnant. What will you need to know, and do, to plan for your pregnancy and parenthood?

**You may find it useful to get more information from:**

- ✦ Family planning services
- ✦ Pre-pregnancy books at your local library, bookstore or clinic
- ✦ Exercise classes
- ✦ Quit smoking programs
- ✦ Nutrition programs
- ✦ Counseling and mental health centers
- ✦ Religious leaders
- ✦ School counselors and nurses
- ✦ Alcohol/drug treatment programs
- ✦ Medical insurance plans
- ✦ Social Services
- ✦ Health Department
- ✦ Health care providers, doctors, nurses, clinics & hospitals

*The best start for your future baby begins right now, before you get pregnant.*

*There are many things you and your partner can do to give your baby the best possible start.*



Panhandle Health District Offices

**Kootenai County**  
8500 N. Atlas Rd  
Hayden ID 83835  
208 415-5100

**Bonner County**  
1020 Michigan  
Sandpoint ID 83864  
208 263-5159

**Boundary County**  
7402 Caribou  
Bonners Ferry ID 83805  
208 267-5558

**Benewah County**  
711 Jefferson  
St. Maries ID 83861  
208 245-4556

**Shoshone County**  
114 W Riverside  
Kellogg ID 83837  
208 786-7474

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**BEFORE  
YOU GET  
PREGNANT...**



**Planning  
is the KEY**



**Panhandle Health District**  
Healthy People in Healthy Communities  
[www2.state.id.us/phd1](http://www2.state.id.us/phd1)

# TIMING

**Choosing WHEN you get pregnant is important.**

**Family Planning.** Planning your future is important. Family Planning lets you decide if you want a child, **when** that will happen, and helps you have a healthy baby. It's important to use a method of birth control until you are ready to have a baby.

**Age.** Women under 18 and over 34 who have babies are more likely to have problems with pregnancy or have small babies.

**Before Your Pregnancy.** Before you stop your birth control method, go to a clinic or doctor for a physical exam and counseling. Go in for this visit at least three months before you want to become pregnant. Ask your clinic or doctor about taking vitamins like folic acid.

**Getting Pregnant.** A woman is fertile about 14 days before her next period. This is the time you are most likely to become pregnant if you have sexual intercourse without birth control. Keep a record of your menstrual cycles. Usually you will see a pattern develop and you will know if a period is late.



**Pregnancy Testing.** Get a pregnancy test if you think you are pregnant or you miss your period. Usual signs of pregnancy include sore or enlarged breasts, urinating more often, nausea and tiredness. It's important to get care as early as possible when you are pregnant.

# HABITS

**Habits before you get pregnant may be good or bad.**

**Eating.** Eat healthy food and regular meals. It's important for you and your baby. Dieting may be harmful. Limit caffeine intake.



**Exercise.** Regular exercise will help you feel better and get your body ready for pregnancy.

**Smoking.** Smoking or being around others' smoke can cause your baby to be born too small or too soon to be healthy. The more you smoke the greater the risk.

**Drugs and Alcohol.** Using drugs, including marijuana, or alcohol can cause miscarriage, brain damage, addiction, and/or death to your baby.

**Other Hazards.** Working with certain metals and chemicals such as lead paint, oven cleaners, bug killers, gasoline and car exhaust can cause pregnancy problems. They also could harm your baby. Other hazards include eating raw meats, handling use cat litter or being around animals or people with certain diseases.

## DID YOU KNOW.....

All of your baby's important organs form very early. Birth defects may happen before a woman has missed a period and knows she is pregnant. You can lower the risk of birth defects and pregnancy problems by making good health choices before and during your pregnancy.

# HEALTH

**Before you get pregnant talk to your nurse, doctor or clinic about:**

**Medicines.** Some medicines, prescribed or bought over the counter may harm your baby.

**Medical Conditions.** Medical problems such as diabetes, epilepsy, high blood pressure, heart or kidney disease, infections, hepatitis or anemia need to be treated before pregnancy.

**Immunizations.** Make sure your immunizations are up to date. They can prevent some diseases like German Measles (rubella) which can cause serious birth defects.



*Planning is the Key*

**Family Health.** Does anyone in your family have a birth defect, inherited disease, or mental retardation? Some diseases and birth problems can run in families.

**STD.** You or your partner could have a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that you don't know about. All STDs (such as chlamydia, syphilis, and HIV/AIDS) can cause serious problems.

**Emotional Health.** Get help if you have violence or abuse in your life, high levels of stress, or not enough personal support. Pregnancy can cause money problems or interfere with school or work.